Maintaining Family Ties



by
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(rahmatullah alayh)

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- The author, translators, editors, sponsors and typesetters humbly request your *Dua*s for them, their parents, families, *Mashaaikh* and *Asaatidha.*

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Foreword

All praise is due to Allah *Ta'ala*, the Lord of the worlds. Peace and salutations be upon our beloved Nabi ﷺ in great abundance forever and ever, eternally. *Aameen*

Allah *Ta'ala*, in His great and infinite mercy, has blessed us with a most beautiful *Deen*. The *Deen*, which has reached us through the medium of our beloved Nabi ﷺ, encompasses every aspect of our lives. We are provided with guidance and teachings, not only as regards our beliefs but also, pertaining to personal hygiene, cleanliness, how to worship Allah Ta'ala, mutual dealings, social conduct, good manners, ethics, etc.

Among the beautiful teachings of Islam great stress is laid upon maintaining peace and harmony between all individuals while going about our daily mundane activities. We, therefore notice that Islam prohibits transactions and business dealings that have the potential of dispute. Books of Islamic jurisprudence are replete with such laws that are not permissible due to the factor of possible dispute.

Similarly, all intoxicants are prohibited in Islam. The possible wisdom of the prohibition is due to the fact that the altered state of the mind leads one to violence. Also, in a like manner, infidelity is prohibited as it invariably leads to disputes between families with the breaking up of marriages. In conformity with the principle of

avoiding disputes and fights, Islam has emphasized the maintaining of family ties. Our beloved Nabi ﷺ has said:

"Learn your lineage so that you may maintain family ties. By doing so your family love will increase, your wealth will expand and lifespan will be blessed." (Tirmidhi, Hadith no. 1979)

In another *Hadith*, Rasulullah ﷺ has said, "There is no virtue more readily rewarded than the act of reuniting family ties and there is no sin for which the doer is more readily punished in this world, besides having punishment reserved for him in the hereafter, than the one committing oppression and the one breaking up ties of kinship." *(Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)*

From the writings and sayings of our pious scholars it is clearly understood that those who sever family ties will suffer hardships, difficulties and misfortunes in this very world besides the torment of the hereafter. Therefore, it is essential to repent and make amends with the one with whom one has broken relationship.

Islam, by means of its teachings of maintaining of good relationship between family members, sows the seeds of harmony and goodwill in this world. We need to reflect upon our lives and rectify any incorrect behaviour pertaining to mutual relationships. Invariably the breaking of ties stems from love of the world. How many brothers and sisters have stopped seeing and talking to each other because of the desire for more and more worldly wealth which one wants to usurp from the other.

The book in your hands is a chapter from 'Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat' written by the giant Islamic scholar of our recent past, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya Kandehlawi (RA). It pertains to the all important topics of maintaining family ties, its benefits and the harms of breaking the ties of kinship.

Madrasah Taleemudeen has very appropriately reprinted this chapter with suitable headings for easier reading. They should be commended for this noble act. May Allah grant us all the *taufeeq* of carefully studying this booklet and acting upon its demands so that we can benefit, not only with prosperity in this world, but also success in the hereafter. *Aameen*

Moulana Haroon Abaas Omar
Isipingo Beach

Introduction

This booklet is part of the book Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat, written by Hadhrat Sheikhul Hadith, Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya (RA). In the introduction Hadhrat writes, "Special emphasis has been laid in the Holy Qur'an and the *Ahaadith* on maintaining good family ties. Rasulullah ﷺ has said that, the reward for *Sadaqah* given to one's own family is doubled.

When Ummul Mu'mineen Hadhrat Maimunah (RA) set free a slave-girl, Rasulullah ﷺ told her that it would have been better if she had given her away to her own uncle. Hence, if there is no other important religious duty, it is better to give *Sadaqah* to a relative rather than to anyone else. However, in meeting a religious need for the cause of Allah ﷻ, the reward is multiplied seven hundred times. Numerous encouraging rewards are promised in the Holy Qur'an and *Ahaadith* for the maintaining of family ties, while punishments are indicated for breaking relationships.

If all of these were to be covered, the book would become too voluminous. Therefore, only a few *Aayaat* about the virtues and punishments have been selected and thereafter a few *Ahaadith* have been discussed."

Aayaat on the importance of maintaining family ties

Allah ﷻ has stressed this subject repeatedly in the Holy Qur'an, which confirms the great importance of this topic. Ka’b Ahbaar ؓ swears by Allah ﷻ and then says that it is mentioned in the Tauraat (Old Testament), “Fear Allah ﷻ and be good to your family, I shall lengthen your life, make it easy for you to get the things which bring comfort, and drive away all difficulties from you.” Allah *Ta’ala* has, at many places in the Qur'an, ordered the maintenance of kinship. As for example it is said;

وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِىْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ

Fear Allah ﷻ, the Being in (in whose name) you ask (things and take promises) from each other and (fear breaking) family ties.

وَاٰتِ ذَا الْقُرْبٰى حَقَّهٗ

Give the relative his right (Maintain good relations with relatives).

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَاْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْاِحْسَانِ وَاِيْتَآئِ ذِى الْقُرْبٰى وَيَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَآءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ

Verily, Allah ﷾ instructs (people to carry out) justice, Ihsaan (do things well, as well as doing everything with the consciousness that Allah ﷾ is watching) and giving (charity) to relatives. And Allah ﷾ forbids immoral behaviour, evil and oppression. He advises you so that you may take heed (and thereby save yourselves from ruin and Jahannam).

Uthmaan Bin Maz'un رضي الله عنه has narrated that he had great love for Rasulullah ﷺ, which led him to become a Muslim. Rasulullah ﷺ asked him to accept Islam and he became a Muslim out of respect for him. Islam had not yet taken root in his heart. Once he was sitting with Rasulullah ﷺ, who was talking to him, when Rasulullah ﷺ suddenly turned around in such a manner as if he was talking to someone invisible. Later he turned to him (Uthmaan) and told him that Jibra'il عليه السلام had come and revealed to him the above *Aayat*. Uthmaan رضي الله عنه felt very pleased with the subject matter of the *Aayat* and he wholeheartedly accepted Islam. After that, Uthmaan رضي الله عنه went to Abu Taalib, Rasulullah's ﷺ uncle and told him that he was with his nephew when this particular *Aayat* was revealed. Abu Taalib told him to follow Hadhrat Muhammad ﷺ, as he will be benefited by Allah ﷾: "Whether he is a true *Rasul* or not, he teaches you good manners and ways of kindness," said Abu Taalib. This is the advice of a person who did not accept Islam, but said that whether the claim of Muhammad ﷺ to *Nubuwwat* be true or false, the teachings of Islam is best in all respects, as these bring about improvement in manners and social conduct. Alas! These days the Muslims have a very poor reputation in this respect.

Forgive and pardon

وَلَا يَأْتَلِ أُولُوا الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ اَنْ يُّؤْتُوْٓا اُولِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنَ
وَالْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۖ وَلْيَعْفُوْا وَلْيَصْفَحُوْا ۗ اَلَا تُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ يَّغْفِرَ اللّٰهُ
لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ

This *Aayah* refers to the incident when Hadhrat ‘Aaisha (RA) was slandered by the *Munaafiqeen* (hypocrites). Some Muslims were unwittingly involved. After Allah ﷻ declared the innocence of ‘Aaisha (RA), her father Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and others swore never to financially assist those Muslims who were involved in promoting the slander against her. Referring to this, Allah ﷻ says:

“The high ranking and wealthy ones among you (like Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه) should not take an oath not to spend on their relatives, the poor and on those who migrate in Allah’s ﷻ path. (Instead of bearing a grudge against these people,) they should (rather) forgive and pardon. Do you not yearn that Allah ﷻ may forgive you? (Just as you would like Allah ﷻ to forgive you for your shortcomings, you should also forgive the shortcomings of others). Allah ﷻ, (Who) is most forgiving, most Merciful. (Hence, you should also forgive and show mercy).”

It was a very serious and trying moment for the respected wife of Rasulullah ﷺ who is the mother of all the Muslims as she was falsely accused. Among these gossip-mongers was a close relative who was supported by Hadhrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, who was deeply grieved and shocked by the relative’s participation in spreading the false allegation. Yet, Allah Ta’ala advised him to forgive them and overlook their faults. Hadhrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه promptly acted and increased their allowances. Do we nowadays treat our relatives in this way, when they slander us or wrongly accuse our family members with something serious and dirty? On the contrary, even after reading

the above *Aayat* of the Holy Qur'an, our hatred will extend not to their children alone but to all those who associate with them. How can we justify such an attitude, when Allah ﷻ clearly orders that we must not stop giving them any type of assistance that they may require? But those who have true faith and have firm conviction about the Greatness and Glory of Allah Ta'ala and His sacred commandments, have proved and shown practically how to obey Him with total submission. May Allah Ta'ala bless them with His Mercy and Kindness worthy of His Divine Honour and Dignity and raise them to the highest spiritual level! They too, had hearts with feelings and self honour, but all these were subject to the pleasure of Allah *Ta'ala.*

Kindness to parents

وَ وَصَّيۡنَا الۡاِنۡسَانَ بِوَالِدَيۡهِ اِحۡسٰنًا ؕ حَمَلَتۡهُ اُمُّهٗ كُرۡهًا وَّ وَضَعَتۡهُ كُرۡهًا ؕ وَ
حَمۡلُهٗ وَ فِصٰلُهٗ ثَلٰثُوۡنَ شَهۡرًا ؕ حَتّٰۤى اِذَا بَلَغَ اَشُدَّهٗ وَ بَلَغَ اَرۡبَعِيۡنَ سَنَةً ۙ قَالَ
رَبِّ اَوۡزِعۡنِىۡۤ اَنۡ اَشۡكُرَ نِعۡمَتَكَ الَّتِىۡۤ اَنۡعَمۡتَ عَلَىَّ وَ عَلٰى وَالِدَىَّ وَ اَنۡ اَعۡمَلَ
صَالِحًا تَرۡضٰٮهُ وَ اَصۡلِحۡ لِىۡ فِىۡ ذُرِّيَّتِىۡ ؕۚ اِنِّىۡ تُبۡتُ اِلَيۡكَ وَ اِنِّىۡ مِنَ الۡمُسۡلِمِيۡنَ ﴿۱۵﴾
اُولٰٓـئِكَ الَّذِيۡنَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنۡهُمۡ اَحۡسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوۡا وَ نَتَجَاوَزُ عَنۡ سَيِّاٰتِهِمۡ فِىۡۤ اَصۡحٰبِ
الۡجَـنَّةِ ؕ وَعۡدَ الصِّدۡقِ الَّذِىۡ كَانُوۡا يُوۡعَدُوۡنَ

We enjoined (commanded) man to treat his parents kindly. His mother bore him with hardship (pain and discomfort) and delivered him with hardship and his bearing and weaning are (completed) in (a maximum period of) thirty months. (In this manner was man carried

and delivered to the world). Until the time arrives when he comes of strength (matures) and (thereafter when he) reaches the age of forty (when he reaches complete mental and spiritual maturity) he says: "O my Rabb! Grant me the ability to be grateful for the favours that you have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and (grant me the ability so) that I (am able to) carry out good deeds with which you are pleased. And (in addition to this) create sound capabilities in my progeny (so that they may also have the ability to be steadfast Muslims). Verily I repent to you (for my sins) and am from among those who surrender (obedient) to you."

These are the people from whom we accept their good deeds, overlook their sins and who will be among the people of Jannah because of the true promise that they have been promised. [ahqaaf 15-16]

Note: Allah *Ta'ala* has repeatedly encouraged mankind about kindness to relatives and the parents, as has been explained in the above *Aayaat*. In this *Aayat* particular emphasis has been laid on being kind to the parents. This commandment about parents appears three times in the Qur'aan. First in Surah *'Ankaboot*, then in Surah *Luqmaan* and thirdly here in Surah *Ahqaaf*, where it appears with greater emphasis.

Journey to Syria

The writer of "Khaazin" has narrated that this *Aayat* was revealed in honour of Hadhrat Abu Bakr ﵁. His Companionship with Rasulullah ﷺ commenced when they travelled to Syria. Rasulullah ﷺ was then twenty years old and Abu Bakr ﵁ was only eighteen. During the journey, they stopped near a Jujube tree. Abu Bakr ﵁ went to meet a monk who lived nearby and Rasulullah ﷺ rested under the tree. The Monk enquired from Abu Bakr ﵁ about the person sitting under the tree. Abu Bakr ﵁ told him that he was Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib. The Monk said, "By Allah! He is a Prophet. No one

has sat under that tree after Isa ؑ. He is the last of the Ambiyaa *('Alayhimus Salaam)*!" When Rasulullah ﷺ reached the age of forty and was bestowed with *'Nubuwwat'* (apostleship), Hadhrat Abu Bakr ؓ embraced Islam. After two years, when he (Abu Bakr) reached the age of forty, he made *Dua*, "O Allah! Allow me to offer proper thanks for the favours that has been granted to me and my parents". Hadhrat Ali ؓ has said that no one among the *Muhaajireen* (Immigrants) has had the advantage of Abu Bakr ؓ, whose parents and children were all Muslims. The *Aayat* in Surah *'Ankaboot* is more clear about the parents, i.e. be kind to them even if they are non-Muslims. When the disbelieving parents are to be treated kindly and graciously by the order of Allah *Ta'ala*, the orders about the Muslim parents are obviously of much greater importance.

Incident of Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqaas ؓ

Hadhrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas ؓ has said that when he embraced Islam, his mother resolved not to eat or drink anything till Sa'd ؓ gave up the religion of Muhammad ﷺ. Food and drink used to be forced into her mouth. Thereupon, the *Aayat* in Surah *'Ankaboot'* was revealed. It shows the stern warning that, even in such difficult circumstances, the parents are to be treated kindly. However, if they order a person to forsake Islam then they are not to be obeyed. When someone asked Hadhrat Hasan ؓ as to what was the limit of kindness to be shown to the parents, he replied, "To spend all that you possess on them and to obey their every command, except if it is to commit a sin." Such has been the teachings of Islam for the Muslims. They were to remain good to their disbelieving parents even if they tried hard to turn a Muslim son to Shirk, he must remain good to them but reject *'Shirk'* (polytheism), and must not obey them in this regard.

لَا طَاعَةَ لِلْمَخْلُوْقِ فِيْ مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقْ

No one is to be obeyed against an obligation of the Creator.

Despite the parent's persistent efforts to make the son a *Mushrik*, the duty of the son is to be good to them. One of the *Ahaadith* regarding the *Aayat* in Surah *Luqmaan* says that this particular *Aayat* was revealed at the time of the incident of Sa’d ؓ.

The *Hadith* quotes Sa’d ؓ as saying that he used to treat his mother very lovingly and, when he became a Muslim, his mother called out, "What have you done? You must leave Islam or else I shall give up eating and drinking till death comes to me, upon which the people will accuse you for being the cause of my death." Sa'd ؓ requested her not to take that step and said that he could not give up his religion. She did not eat or drink for two successive days. On that Sa'd ؓ told her that, even if she had one hundred lives and gave up all, one after the other, still he would not give up Islam. When she saw his determination, she started taking food and drink.

Common sense

Faqih Abul Laith *(Rahmatullah alaih)* says that, even if Allah *Ta’ala* did not emphasise the rights of parents, common sense demands that their rights are important and obligatory. So much so, that Allah *Ta’ala*’s commandment about this has been given in all the heavenly Books, namely the Taurah, Injeel, Zaboor and Qur’aan Shareef, and all the Ambiyaa ؑ received revelations about it with full importance.

The above three *Aayaat* were concerning the good treatment of the family. The next three *Aayaat* contain warnings against their ill-treatment.

Aayaat on retribution for severing family ties

وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهٖۤ اِلَّا الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾ الَّذِيْنَ يَنْقُضُوْنَ عَهْدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مِيْثَاقِهٖ ۪

وَيَقْطَعُوْنَ مَآ اَمَرَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖۤ اَنْ يُّوْصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُوْنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ

Only the evil doers (the Kuffaar) are misguided by them. (the evil doers are) Those who break the promise (pact) they made to Allah ﷻ after agreeing to it (referring to the promise Allah ﷻ made them take at the hands of their Ambiyaa that they would believe in and assist Rasulullah ﷺ if he appeared in their time), who cut off that which Allah ﷻ has ordered to be joined (such as family ties), and who spread corruption (mischief) on earth. These are certainly the losers (because they are headed for Jahannam).

Note: Just as Allah *Ta'ala* has ordered kindness towards one's family, especially one's parents, at several places in the Qur'aan, similarly He has also warned repeatedly against the severing of ties with one's relatives, particularly with the parents. Allah *Ta'ala* says:

وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ

Fear that Allah ﷻ in whom (in whose name) you ask (for things and take promises) from each other and (fear breaking) family ties.

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوْٓا اَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ اِمْلَاقٍ

Do not kill your children out of fear of poverty (by aborting unborn children fearing that you will be unable to support them).

وَالَّذِىْ قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ اُفٍّ لَّكُمَآ اَتَعِدٰنِنِىْٓ اَنْ اُخْرَجَ وَ قَدْ خَلَتِ الْقُرُوْنُ مِنْ قَبْلِىْ ۚ وَ هُمَا يَسْتَغِيْثٰنِ اللّٰهَ وَيْلَكَ اٰمِنْ ۖ ۗ اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ ۚ ۖ فَيَقُوْلُ مَا هٰذَآ اِلَّآ اَسَاطِيْرُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ

(Unlike these people there is also) the one (Kaafir) who says to his believing parents, "Fie upon you both! Do you warn me that I shall be raised (after death) when many generations have passed before me (without being raised yet)?" The two of them (his Mu'min parents) seek Allah's ﷻ assistance saying, "Woe unto you! Believe! Allah's promise (of resurrection) is true." He then says, "These are only tales of the old folk (which I shall not believe)."

اَنْ تُفْسِدُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَ تُقَطِّعُوْٓا اَرْحَامَكُمْ

You would spread corruption on earth and (let alone harming others, you would even) sever family ties.

Advice of Hadhrat Zainul Aabideen (RA)

Muhammad Baaqir *(Rahmatullah alaih)* was given strong advice by his father. He narrates that his father, Zain-ul-Aabideen *(Rahmatullah alaih)* advised him as follows: “Avoid the company of five types of people, do not talk to them, never walk with them even if you come across one of them by chance. Those five are: firstly an evil or immoral person who will sell you for a morsel of bread, or even less.” When asked how anyone could sell a person for less than a morsel he replied, "He will do so in hope of receiving a morsel which he may never get." The next one is a miser who will forsake you in your time of need. The third is a liar who is a cheat. He will mislead you by making you believe the far off thing to be near and the near one to be far off. The fourth is a stupid person, who is to be ignored for fear of causing you harm when he intends to do good to you, as it is said that a wise enemy is better than a foolish friend. The fifth is the one who severs ties with his family, as the curse of Allah ﷻ descends upon him, as has been mentioned at three places in the Holy Qur'an.

وَالَّذِيْنَ يَنْقُضُوْنَ عَهْدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مِيْثَاقِهٖ وَيَقْطَعُوْنَ مَآ اَمَرَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖٓ اَنْ يُّوْصَلَ

وَيُفْسِدُوْنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوْٓءُ الدَّارِ

(On the other hand) those who break Allah's pledge (the Pledge of Allah) after confirming it, who sever (break) that (family ties) which Allah commanded to be joined and spread corruption on earth, for them shall be a curse (they will be distanced from Allah's mercy) and for them shall be a terrible outcome (Jahannam).

Note: Qatadah *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has advised being extra careful in guarding against breaking an agreement, for that earns the displeasure of Allah ﷾. There are more than twenty *Aayaat* containing Allah ﷾'s caution and threats of severe punishment for breach of a ratified agreement. The author believes that Allah ﷾ has not admonished so many times on any other matter. Therefore, a person must fulfil an agreement under all circumstances. Anas ؓ reports Rasulullah ﷺ as saying, "He who is not trustworthy has no faith *(Imaan)* and he who does not fulfil his promises has no religion!" Abu Umamah and 'Ubadah *(Radhiallahu anhuma)* have also made the same comment. *(Durre Manthur).*

Three orders

Maimoon Bin Mihraan *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has said that there are three orders which make no distinction between a Muslim and a non-Muslim; First, an agreement must be fulfilled, be it with a Muslim or a non-Muslim because it amounts to a vow with Allah ﷾. Secondly, family ties must be upheld, whether it is with a Muslim or a non-Muslim. Thirdly, a property held in trust must be returned, whether the owner of the trust is a Muslim or a non-Muslim.

There are several *Aayaat* in the Qur'aan regarding fulfilment of promises, one of which is:

اَوْفُوْا بِالْعَهْدِ ۚ اِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔوْلًا

And fulfil the pledge (pledges made with people as well as pledges made with Allah ﷾). Certainly questioning shall take place (on the

day of Qiyaamah) with regard to pledges (and people will be taken to task for breaking their pledges).

Qatadah *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has said that the command regarding family ties concerns both near and distant relatives. The other warning in the *Aayat* is about breaking relationships. Umar bin ʻAbdul ʻAziz *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has said that one should not associate with a person who breaks relationships between families, as he found a curse on him at two places in the Holy Qur'an: one, in the above *Aayat* and the other in Surah Muhammad (ﷺ). The reference in ʻSurah Muhammad' has already been indicated in a preceding paragraph, where it has been said, in the context of the breaking of relationships, that they are the people who have been cursed by Allah *Ta'ala* and they have been made deaf (cannot listen to Allah's commandments) and blind (that they cannot see the path of righteousness). While ʻUmar bin ʻAbdul ʻAziz *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has mentioned the curse in two places, Zainul Abideen *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has pointed out three places. Two are as above, in Surah Ra'd and Surah Muhammad, while in the third place, he is called 'a loser' and 'one gone astray' which is close to being called an accursed person, as mentioned earlier in the *Aayat* from Surah *Baqarah.*

Unity in words only

Salmaan ؓ has quoted Rasulullah ﷺ as saying that, when words are plentiful and practice is locked up in a safe (that is, plenty of speeches and elaborate writings, but not followed by actions), such an approach creates agreement in words but hearts remain opposed and there is discord and breach of kinship. In that event, Allah *Ta'ala* deprives people of His mercy and blessings and makes them blind and deaf. Hasan ؓ has also quoted Rasulullah ﷺ as saying that, when people show their knowledge but have no deeds, and show love

verbally while having hatred in their hearts and no regard for the family, Allah *Ta'ala* drives them away from His kindness and mercy, whereby, they are unable to see the path of righteousness or what is right or wrong. One *Hadith* says that the fragrance of *Jannah* spreads out to a distance covered in five hundred years, but the one who remains disobedient to his parents and disregards family ties will never experience the sweet fragrance of *Jannah*.

Deprived of Allah Ta'ala's blessings

Abdullah Ibne Abi Aufa ﵁ has said, that once, in the evening on the day of 'Arafah, we (the Sahaabah) were sitting around Rasulullah ﷺ. He announced, "Anyone who has broken his relationship with any of his family, should leave the company and not sit with us!" Only one man sitting at a great distance stood up and left. After a while, he returned and joined the gathering. Rasulullah ﷺ asked him why he had left after his statement. The man replied that, after hearing the order, he went straight to his aunt who had broken ties with him. On seeing him she asked how it was that he had come to her against his normal practice. He repeated to her the order of Rasulullah ﷺ, on hearing which, she made *Dua-e-maghfirat* for him and he made a similar *dua* for her and thus they reconciled with each other. Rasulullah ﷺ was greatly pleased with him, allowed him to rejoin the company, and then said that Allah *Ta'ala* does not grant His blessings to a community among whom there is someone who has broken ties with his relatives.

This *Hadith* has been quoted by Faqeeh Abul-Laith *(Rahmatullah alaih)*, who says that breaking family ties is such a grave sin that, even by sitting with a person guilty of such a sin, one is deprived of the blessings of Allah *Ta'ala*. It is important therefore, that anyone who is involved in such a situation must seek forgiveness of Allah *Ta'ala* and build up his relationship with his family. Rasulullah ﷺ has said that there is no good deed the reward of which comes faster,

than being good to one's family and there is no sin greater than the breaking of family ties in respect of punishment in this life and in the *Aakhirah.* Several *Ahaadith* indicate that the punishment for breach of kinship is experienced even in this life, and in the life of *Aakhirah*, as evident from the above *Aayaat.*

An Interesting Incident

Faqih Abul-Laith *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has mentioned a strange story about a very pious and honest man from Khurasan who went to live in Makkah Mukarramah. People used to leave their property as a trust with him. Once, a person left ten thousand Dinars in trust with him and left on a journey. When that person returned, the trustee had died, so the person made enquiries from the family of the deceased but no one had any knowledge of his wealth. As a large sum of money was involved, the owner asked a gathering of *Ulama* in Makkah as to what course of action he should adopt. They told him that the Khurasani was a very pious person who must be in *Jannah*. The owner should visit the Zam Zam well after midnight and call the name of the trustee, asking him about his money. The owner repeated the process for three nights consecutively, but received no reply. He went back to the ʿ*Ulama* and told them about his efforts. They were surprised and recited:

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْن

They were afraid, lest he should not be in *Jannah*. They advised him to visit a certain place where he would find a valley called Barhoot. Here he must locate a well wherein he should make a loud call. He did so and received a reply after the very first call, that his money was safe. Not trusting his children, he had buried it in a particular

place inside the house. The person should ask his son to show him the place where he should dig his money out. The man did so and got back his wealth. Amazed, he asked the deceased how he was in such a place in spite of being a pious person. The deceased replied that he had some relatives in Khurasan, with whom he had broken ties and had died without mending it, and this was the cause of his punishment.

Ali ﷺ has said, "The best of all valleys is the Valley of Makkah Mukarramah, and that valley in India where Adam عليه السلام was brought down from *Jannah*, where all the fragrances are, which people use. The worst of valleys are the Ahqaaf and the Hazarmout, known as Barhoot. The best of all the wells is the Zam Zam and the worst of all is the Barhoot well where all the spirits of non-believers are kept." The incident related above is a heavenly sign (i.e. Allah *Ta'ala* shows to a saintly being a supernatural occurrence that goes beyond the norm).

Respect for parents

إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلٰهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ وَّلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا
وَقُلْ لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيْمًا ﴿٢٣﴾ وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَّبِّ
ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِيْ صَغِيْرًا ﴿٢٣﴾ رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِيْ نُفُوْسِكُمْ ط إِنْ تَكُوْنُوْا
صٰلِحِيْنَ فَإِنَّهٗ كَانَ لِلْأَوَّابِيْنَ غَفُوْرًا

If one of them (your parents), or both of them attain old age, do not even tell them "oof!" (or anything else that may cause them hurt) and do not rebuke them (even though they may be at fault). (Always) Speak gently to them (Never raise your voice when speaking to them. Speak with respect and never speak harshly to them).

Lower for them the wings of humility (always be humble and soft-hearted towards them) out of compassion (meekness) and say, "O my Rabb! Show mercy to them (my parents) as they had (been merciful towards me when they) raised me when I was young." (Just as parents are merciful towards their children when their children are little and depend on them, the children should also show mercy towards their parents when their parents grow old and depend on them.)

Your Rabb knows best what is in your (souls) hearts (He knows your intentions when you care for your parents). If you are righteous

(obedient to Allah and your parents) then surely He is most Forgiving to those who turn to Him (Allah will forgive those who sincerely repent for their sins).

Note: Mujaahid *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has said, in the explanation of this *Aayat*, that when parents become aged, you should not complain over washing their urine and excreta, as they washed it when you were a baby. Ali ﵁ has said that if there was any degree of disrespect below uttering "oof", Allah *Ta'ala* would (probably) have forbidden it. When someone asked Hasan ﵁ as to what the lowest degree of disrespect was, he replied, "To deprive them of the benefit of your property and wealth, to avoid seeing them and to look at them harshly." Another person asked Hasan ﵁ as to what the *'Qaul-e-Karim'* (gracious word) meant. He replied, "To address them lovingly (as '*Abba* or *Ammi*') and to avoid calling them by their names."

Zubair Ibne Muhammad *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has explained that whenever they call you, reply, "I am present." Qatadah (RA) has said that they should be spoken to politely. Someone asked Saeed bin Musayyab *(Rahmatullah alaih)* that the Qur'an often repeats the order for good conduct, which is understandable, but the meaning of *'Qaul-e-Karim'* is unclear. He replied that it means to speak in the way a slave who is guilty of a grave offence, speaks to his master who has a harsh nature.

Never talk rudely

'Aishah *(Radhiallahu anha)* has said that a person, accompanied by an old man, came to Rasulullah ﷺ who enquired who the old man was. The man replied that he was his father. Rasulullah ﷺ told the man, "Do not walk in front of him, do not sit down before he takes his seat, do not call him by his name and never talk to him rudely." Urwah *(Rahmatullah alaih)* was asked by someone what is meant

when the Qur'aan says, 'lower unto them'? He replied that, if and when they speak to you unpleasantly, do not look at them angrily, as the dislike first becomes apparent in the eyes.

Aisha *(Radhiallahu anha)* quoted Rasulullah ﷺ as saying, "Whoever looks at his father angrily, he is being disobedient." Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud ؓ has said that once he asked Rasulullah ﷺ as to what was the most acceptable deed in the eyes of Allah *Ta'ala*. Rasulullah ﷺ said, '*Salaat* offered on its right time.' He then asked, "What came next?" The reply was, "Good behaviour towards parents." He again asked, "What came next?" The reply was, *"Jihaad."* Another *Hadith* says that the pleasure of Allah *Ta'ala* lies in the pleasure of the father and Allah's ﷻ displeasure is caused by the father's displeasure.

Children's duty

The writer of Mazaahir has written that it is the children's duty to be humble, to show love and to serve their parents such that they remain pleased with them, to always obey them in rightful actions, never to be rude or treat them haughtily, even if they happen to be non Muslims, nor to raise their own voice above their parents, nor to call them by name, nor to precede them in any action and, even if they are non-Muslims, to be polite in calling them to good deeds and to prevent them from committing sins even if they do not accept your advice, to continue being good to them and to make dua for them continuously, seeking the forgiveness of Allah *Ta'ala* on their behalf. This is evident from the Holy Qur'an: in Surah *Maryam*, we are told that Ibrahim ؑ gave good advice (*Da'wah*) to his father once and then said to him, "I shall make *dua* to Allah *Ta'ala* for you."

Some *Ulama* have stated that obedience to parents regarding forbidden things is not permissible, but in doubtful matters, it is obligatory to obey them, bearing in mind that *'Taqwa'* and the need to be good to them are both essential. For example, if their food is of a

doubtful nature and your refusal to eat with them might injure their feelings, you should rather eat with them.

Ibne Abbas ﵁ has said that two doors of *Jannah* will remain open for every Muslim whose parents are alive and he serves them well, while if he keeps them unhappy, Allah *Ta'ala* will not be pleased with him until they are pleased with him. Someone asked, "What if they are cruel?" Ibne Abbas ﵁ replied, "Then too you must remain good to them."

Jannah under the mother's feet

Talha ﵁ has said that once a man came to Rasulullah ﷺ and requested permission to go for *Jihaad.* Rasulullah ﷺ asked if his mother was alive. He replied that she was. Rasulullah ﷺ then told him to continue serving her well, as *Jannah* lies under the mother's feet. Rasulullah ﷺ repeated this a second time, and even a third time.

Anas ﵁ said that once a man came to Rasulullah ﷺ and stated his great desire to go for *Jihaad*, but added that he had no means for doing so. On being asked if any one of his parents was alive, he replied that his mother was alive. Rasulullah ﷺ then said, "Fear Allah *Ta'ala* in her regard," meaning, be careful in fulfilling your obligations towards her, up to the level of *Taqwa* and when you attain that, you will be considered as the one who has performed *Umrah* and *Hajj*, and also participated in *Jihaad.* i.e. you will receive whatever reward is earned from all these actions.

Muhammad Ibne Munkadir *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has said, "My brother Umar used to spend the whole night in salaah, while I used to spend the night in massaging my mother's feet. I never felt jealous of his nightlong prayers, nor desired to exchange his reward with mine." Aishah *(Radhiallahu anha)* has said that she asked Rasulullah ﷺ that, "Of all the duties of a woman towards other people, which one is the greatest?" He replied, "The one she owes her husband." She then

asked who came next and Rasulullah ﷺ replied, “Her mother.” A *Hadith* says, “Remain chaste in respect of other people’s women-folk, then your own women will be chaste. If you remain good to your own parents, your own children will be good to you." *(Durre Manthur)*

Barkat in serving parents

Taa-oos *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has said that a certain person had four sons. He fell ill. One of his sons told the other three that if they were prepared to nurse their father in his illness, he would take the whole of his father's property and, if they wanted the whole property, he would nurse him without any claim on the property. They agreed to the second course and left the nursing to him. He looked after his father very well until his father passed on. As agreed, he did not take anything from the property. He saw in a dream, one night, a person telling him that one hundred *Dinaars* (gold pieces) were buried at such and such place, which he could take. He asked the person if that money had *Barkat.* The reply was, “No, it is not so”. He related the dream the next morning to his wife, who insisted that he should take the money but he did not agree. He dreamt again the following night and someone told him about ten *Dinaars* lying buried at a certain place. When he again asked if it had *Barkat* (was blessed), the reply was in the negative. He related the dream to his wife the next morning, who insisted that he should go and take it, but he refused to do so. The third night, he saw in a dream someone telling him that a single *Dinaar* was lying at such and such place, and he should go and take it. He again asked if it had *Barkat* (was blessed). The reply was, “Yes, it did”. So, he went and took the *Dinaar*, purchased two fish with it and brought them home. When cut open for cooking, an invaluable pearl was found in the stomach of each fish. Both these pearls were sold to the king of the country in return for ninety mule-loads of gold.

Ahaadith concerning the maintenance of family ties

عَنْ اَبِیْ هُرَیْرَةَ رَضِیَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَجُلٌ یَارَسُوْلَ اللهِ مَنْ اَحَقُّ بِحُسْنِ صَحَابَتِیْ قَالَ اُمُّكَ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَنْ قَالَ اُمُّكَ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَنْ قَالَ اُمُّكَ ثُمَّ مَنْ قَالَ اَبُوْكَ وَفِیْ رِوَایَةٍ قَالَ اُمَّكَ ثُمَّ اُمَّكَ ثُمَّ اُمَّكَ ثُمَّ اَبَاكَ ثُمَّ اَدْنَاكَ فَاَدْنَاكَ (متفق علیه كذا فی المشكوة)

Abu Hurairah ؓ narrates that a man asked Rasulullah ﷺ, "For whom should I be most concerned in maintaining good relations?" Rasulullah said, "Your mother." The man put the same question a second and a third time and each time Rasulullah ﷺ gave the same reply. When he repeated the same question the fourth time, Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Your father and then other relatives, in order of nearness to you in kinship."

Note: Some *Ulama* suppose from this *Hadith* that a mother's share is three parts in regard to kind treatment, because Rasulullah ﷺ said, 'Your mother' three times and said, 'your father' only when the question was repeated for the fourth time. The reason for this preference, the *Ulama* say, lies in the fact that a mother has to undergo three hardships for her child: pregnancy, child-birth and breast-feeding. The *Ulama* have added that, if a person does not have the means to take care of both his parents he should give first preference to his mother. However, the father enjoys preference in

matters relating to respect and obedience from his children. *(Mazahir-e-Haqq).*

Being a woman, a mother clearly needs more help and the loving care of her children. Near relatives are then to be given preference (over others) in order of their closeness, that is the nearer relations will be given preference over the distant ones.

Another *Hadith* narrates, "Begin with your mother in your good treatment, then comes your father, then your sister, then your brother and then the rest of the family in order of their nearness in relationship. Do not ignore your neighbours and the needy." *(Kanz)*

Easy death

Another *Hadith* indicates that Allah *Ta'ala* will make the hour of death easy for him who possesses the following three qualities and grant him entry into *Jannah*:

1. He is kind to the weak.
2. He treats his parents with loving care.
3. He shows favour to his minors. *(Mishkaat)*

Increase in sustenance and a long life

عَنْ اَنَسٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ اَحَبَّ اَنْ يَّبْسُطَ لَهُ فِيْ رِزْقِهِ وَيَنْسَأَلَهُ فِيْ اَثَرِهِ فَلْيَصِلْ رَحِمَهُ (متفق عليه)

Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said, "Anyone who wishes to have his means of livelihood increased and a lengthened life should treat his relatives with kindness."

In this *Hadith* the word 'anyone who wishes to have his footprints last longer', means a long life. For he who lives longer will leave his footprints for a longer period. When a person dies, his footprints are destroyed after a short time. Some people may object to this *Hadith* saying, "Everybody's term of life is fixed." At many places in the Holy Qur'an, it has been clearly stated that the term of life is fixed. Not a moment can be added or lessened there from.

Some *Ulama* have explained the term 'lengthened life' as granting of *'Barakah'* (blessings) in life. Due to Divine blessings, a person may complete tasks within hours, which others usually take days to perform, and may complete in days what is usually done in months. Others say, that 'lengthened life' means praiseworthy remembrance of his good deeds long after his death. Others say that it means increase in his progeny and his descendants flourishing after his death.

It has to be admitted that, as a statement of Rasulullah ﷺ, all of whose sayings are doubtlessly true. These benefits will increase by maintaining good family ties. Allah *Ta'ala* is all powerful. He may create and bring about anything He wills. Whatever He wills must happen and He creates such subtle means for bringing about events that the wisest of men are taken by surprise. Therefore, there should be no doubt about the 'lengthened life' granted as a reward for strengthening family bonds.

Truly, the decrees of fate are fixed, but Allah *Ta'ala* has introduced causal relationship in the affairs of the world. For everything that happens in this world, there is a cause either hidden or clear. For example when a person is suffering from cholera, we send for the doctors in the hope of helpful treatment to make him survive, though we know that his hour of death is fixed and cannot be delayed or hastened. There is no problem with giving *Sadaqah* to deserving relatives as an effective prescription for a long life. This recipe was prescribed by the wisest of all men, Rasulullah ﷺ, whose judgment and treatment for human ailments could never be wrong, whereas the physicians of this world may err while diagnosing a disease or writing a prescription. The subject matter of the *Hadith* quoted above has appeared in other narrations with slight differences, hence it is authentic.

Four things guaranteed

It has been narrated in another *Hadith*, on the authority of Ali رضي الله عنه, that for him who guarantees one thing (maintaining family ties), Rasulullah ﷺ has guaranteed four things, namely long life, respect among relatives, increase in livelihood and entry into *Jannah. (Kanz)*

Rasulullah ﷺ told Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه that, three results are assured:

1. If a victim of cruelty forgives his oppressor, he will earn greater respect.

2. Whoever craves for more after receiving an increase in his wealth, will find a decrease in it.
3. Whoever opens the door of *Sadaqah* and shows regards for his relatives, will have abundant wealth. *(Durre Manthur)*

Ten rewards

Abul-Laith *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has said that ten rewards are priceless for maintaining good family ties:

1. It wins the pleasure of Allah *Ta'ala*, who has ordered its fulfilment.
2. It promotes happiness among the family and Rasulullah ﷺ has said that the best of deeds is to make a Muslim happy.
3. The angels also feel happy about it.
4. The Muslims praise the one who keeps it up.
5. *Shaitaan* is grieved by it.
6. It brings a long life.
7. It increases one's livelihood.
8. It brings happiness to the dead when they come to know about it.
9. It strengthens mutual help. When you do good to someone, he would help you wholeheartedly in your time of need.
10. One will benefit from it after his death, as the beneficiaries will always remember him with good wishes and *Dua*s.

Anas رضي الله عنه says that three types of persons will enjoy a place in the shade of the Grand Throne of Allah *Ta'ala*:

1. The supporter of the family, who enjoys a long life, expansion in sustenance and also an enlarged grave.
2. A widow who brings up young children of her deceased husband, without her remarrying, so that she has no difficulties in looking after them till they are grown up.

3. The person who invites the poor and orphans to participate in his feasts.

Hasan ﵁ has quoted Rasulullah ﷺ to have said that Allah *Ta'ala* loves two footsteps, the one taken for the sake of obligatory *Salaah* and the other taken to meet a dear friend or a relative. Some *Ulama* have said that five things, if observed regularly and constantly, earn such rewards from Allah *Ta'ala* which are even bigger than high mountains, and one's means of livelihood are also increased on account of them. These are:

1. Constancy in giving *Sadaqah*, be it large or small.
2. Spending regularly on one's relatives (to strengthen family bonds), whether one spends little or a lot.
3. *Jihaad* (striving in the path of Allah ﷻ).
4. Always remaining in a state of *wudhu* (ablution)
5. Steadfastness in obedience to one's parents.

(Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)

A *Hadith* says, "Strengthening ties of kinship is a virtue for which one is most readily rewarded and blessed by Allah *Ta'ala*. Many a sinner is granted abundance in wealth and in children, on account of kind behaviour towards relatives." *(Ihya)*

It occurs in a *Hadith* that the following virtues cause one's misfortune to change into good fortune, lengthen one's term of life and prevents an evil death: giving away *Sadaqah* in the proper manner, adopting ways that are good and beneficial (for others), treating one's parents with kindness, and maintaining family ties.

There are several other *Ahaadith* which state that a man's livelihood is increased and his term of life is lengthened on account of his kindness towards his relatives. We have quoted just a few of them, by way of example. Rasulullah ﷺ has pointed out to us an easy way of achieving these two ambitions through strengthening ties of kinship. All those who desire a long life and an increased livelihood

can try this prescription suggested by Rasulullah ﷺ, if they sincerely believe in the truth of his sayings, and spend as much as they can on strengthening kinship. For, it is bound to be rewarded with an increase in the means of livelihood and, furthermore, it guarantees a prolonged term of life.

Being kind to your father's friends

عَنْ اِبْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِیَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلّٰی اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اِنَّ مِنْ اَبَرِّ الْبِرِّ صِلَةُ الرَّجُلِ اَهْلَ وُدِّ اَبِيْهِ بَعْدَ اَنْ يُّوَلِّیَ (رواہ مسلم کذا فی المشکوۃ)

Ibne Umar ﷠ narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ once said, "An excellent way of showing kindness to one's father in his absence is to treat his friends and associates in a kind way."

Note: Absence may be temporary or permanent from this world i.e. death. In the latter case, showing kindness to one's father's friends will be of a higher virtue for, if a person treats his father's friends kindly, in the absence of his father when alive, he may be doing so in order to win the favour of his father for his own selfish designs, whereas, if he treats them kindly even after the death of his father, this will not be for any selfish design, but will be out of genuine regard and respect for him.

In another *Hadith*, Ibne Dinaar *(Rahmatullah alaih)* relates that Abdullah Ibne Umar ﷠ was on a journey to Makkah when he met a Bedouin on the way. Ibne Umar ﷠ gave him his own riding-beast and took off his turban and gave it to him as a gift. Ibne Dinar *(Rahmatullah alaih)* said to him, "This man might have been pleased with something less." Ibne Umar ﷠ replied, "This man's father was a friend of my father and I have heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying, "Showing kindness to the friends of one's father gets the best return."

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ says that, on one of his visits to Madinah, Ibne Umar ﷺ came to see him and said, "Do you know why I have come to see you? I have heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying, 'If anyone wishes to show kindness to his father who is dead, let him treat his father's friends in a kindly manner, and (you know that) my father (Umar) was a friend of yours.' *(Targheeb)*

A *Hadith* reports Abu Usaid Maalik bin Rabi'ah ﷺ as saying, "While we were sitting in the company of Rasulullah ﷺ, a man of the Banu Salima tribe came to him and said, "O Rasulullah ﷺ, Is there any way left for me to show kindness to my parents after their death?" He replied, "Yes;

1. you can make dua for Allah's ﷻ blessings on them,
2. make *'Istighfaar'* for them (ask Allah's ﷻ forgiveness for them),
3. fulfil the promises (if any) made by them with people,
4. treat their relatives and dependents with kindness
5. show respect to their friends." *(Mishkaat)*

   A version adds: At this the man said, "What an excellent idea!" and Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "Practice it, then." *(Targheeb)*

Making Dua for your Parents after their death

عَنْ اَنَسٍ رَضِیَ اللّٰہُ عَنْہُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ صَلَّى اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ اِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَیَمُوْتُ وَالِدَاہُ اَوْ اَحَدُھُمَا وَاَنَّہُ لَھُمَا لَعَاقٌّ فَلَایَزَالُ یَدْعُوْالَھُمَا وَیَسْتَغْفِرُلَھُمَا حَتّٰی یَکْتُبَہُ اللّٰہُ بَارًّا

(رواہ البیھقی فی الشعب کذا فی المشکوۃ)

Rasulullah ﷺ says, "If a person's parents die, or one of them dies, and he has not been obedient to them, but he goes on asking forgiveness for them and making *dua* for them, Allah *Ta'ala* will record him as an obedient son."

Note: How numerous are the blessings and favours of Allah *Ta'ala* to His men! Very often, circumstances arise which cause a certain unpleasantness between parents and children, but the parent-child relationship is too deep-rooted to allow for permanent separation from each other. So, when a man's father or mother dies, parental love returns, he feels deep regret and is distressed when remembering their loving care for himself. Allah ﷻ has, in His unlimited Mercy and Compassion for man, shown a way for remedying such situations. He has ordered that, if a person prays for Allah Ta'ala's blessing for his parents after their death, makes *'Istighfaar'* for them and, after doing a good deed involving the spending of money or otherwise, requests Allah ﷻ to transfer its rewards to their credit (called *'Eesaal-e-Thawab'*), these good deeds

will compensate for his failure to fulfil the duties he owed them in their lifetime and he will be recorded as an obedient son.

It is one of the greatest favours of Allah *Ta'ala* to His men that He has opened a way for the heedless sons and daughters to forgive their sins, even after the death of their parents when, normally, it is said to be too late. What a shame would it be if we were too hard-hearted not to avail of this opportunity for forgiveness! Undoubtedly, there are very few whose behaviour to their parents is always correct and who give their parents their due rights. It is therefore advisable that each one of us make a routine of performing some good deeds regularly and make *dua* to Allah سبحانه وتعالى to transfer the blessings earned in this way to the credit of his deceased parents. It should be cultivated as a habit, in view of its great benefits.

A *Hadith* says that, if anyone performs *Hajj* on behalf of his parents, it is treated as a *'Hajj-e-Badal'* (i.e. it atones for their failure to perform *Fardh Hajj* during their life), the glad tidings whereof are conveyed to their souls in the heavens above, and he is recorded as an obedient son, even though he may have been unmindful before. Another *Hadith* says that if a person performs *Hajj* on behalf of either of his parents, the father (or mother) receives the reward for one *Hajj*, while his own reward for it is equal to that of a person performing *Hajj* nine times.

'Allaama 'Ainee *(Rahmatullah alaih)* has quoted a *Hadith* in his explanatory notes on Bukhari, to the following effect:

"Whosoever recites the following *Dua*, and then requests Allah *Ta'ala* to transfer the reward earned thereby to the credit of his parents, is like one having fulfilled his obligations to them"

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَرَبِّ الْاَرْضِ وَرَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ وَلَهُ

الْكِبْرِيَاءُ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْم وَلِلّٰهِ الْحَمْدُ رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ

وَرَبِّ الْاَرْضِ وَرَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ وَلَهُ الْعَظْمَةُ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْم هُوَ الْمَلِكُ رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَرَبُّ الْاَرْضِ وَرَبُّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ وَلَهُ النُّوْرُ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْم

All praise be to Allah ﷻ, the Sustainer of the worlds; the Lord of the heavens and the earth; to Him alone belongs the true greatness in the heavens and in the earth and He alone has supremacy and is Wise. All praise be to Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, the Sustainer of the Worlds, to Him alone belongs Majesty in the heavens and in the earth, and He is Supreme and Wise; He alone is the Sovereign, Lord of the heavens and the earth and the Sustainer of the Worlds; to Him alone belongs the celestial light (Nur) of the heavens and the earth and He is the Majestic, the Wise

Another *Hadith* relates: What does it cost a person if, having spent something as a *Nafl Sadaqah*, he makes *dua* to Allah *Ta'ala* to transfer the reward to his parents, provided they are Muslims? In this manner, they will receive the blessings while his own reward will not decrease. *(Kanz).* According to this *Hadith*, a man does not need to perform any virtuous deed exclusively for his parents but may merely make *dua* to Allah *Ta'ala* to transfer to his parents the rewards earned by him when spending for a good cause.

Abdullah Ibne Salaam ﵁ says: "I swear by the name of the Perfect Being, Who sent Rasulullah ﷺ with the message of truth, it is implied in the Sacred Book of Allah ﷻ, 'Do not sever ties with him who has done a favour to strengthen ties with your father, for that might cause your loss of faith."

It occurs in another *Hadith* that: "Whosoever goes to visit the graves of his parents, or the grave of either of them every Friday, his sins will be forgiven and he will be counted amongst the obedient."

'Allama Awzaa-ee *(Rahmatullah alaih)* says, "I have heard that, if a person who has been unmindful towards his parents makes *'Istighfaar'* for them after their death, pays off their debts and does not speak ill of them, he will be counted as obedient and that, if a person who has been obedient towards his parents speaks ill of them after their death, does not pay off the debt they owed, nor makes *'Istighfaar'* for them, he will be treated as disobedient." *(Dure Manthur).*

Looking after your widowed or divorced daughter

عَنْ سُرَاقَةَ بْنِ مَالِكٍ اَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ اَلَا اَدُلُّكُمْ عَلىٰ اَفْضَلِ الصَّدَقَةِ

اِبْنَتُكَ مَرْ دُوْدَةٌ اِلَيْكَ لَيْسَ لَهَا كَاسِبٌ غَيْرُكَ (رواه ابن ماجة كذا فى المشكوة)

Rasulullah ﷺ once said, "Shall I not advise you on an excellent Sadaqah? It is what you spend to provide for a daughter who has been sent back to you, and who has no one but you to earn her livelihood."

Note: 'Has been sent back to you' means sent back to you after being widowed or divorced by her husband. It may also mean that some other circumstances have necessitated her coming back to her parents. In these cases, all that is spent to meet her requirements is treated as an excellent *Sadaqah*, for it combines many acts of virtue:

1. *Sadaqah*
2. Helping a person in difficulty
3. Strengthening family ties
4. Loving care for one's children
5. Sympathy with the grieved

Previously, when the children lived with their parents, they were happy to take care of their needs but, when they return to their parents, after marriage and living happily in their own homes, both

children and parents feel extremely grieved. Rasulullah ﷺ once said, 'For anyone helping a distressed person, Allah *Ta'ala* records seventy-three grades of forgiveness, one of which shall suffice him for his well-being in all worldly affairs and seventy two will raise him spiritually on the Day of *Qiyaamah*.'

Umme Salamah *(Radhiallahu anha)* once asked Rasulullah ﷺ 'Shall I gain any reward for what I spend on the sons of Abu Salamah my previous husband, for they are my sons?' He replied, 'Spend on them, you will be rewarded for spending on them.' *(Mishkaat)* Besides, it is a praiseworthy act, according to Shariah, to treat one's children with kindness and loving care, even when they are not in need of help. Once, Rasulullah ﷺ embraced his grandsons, Hasan and Husain *(Radhiallahu anhuma)* who were with him. Aqra Ibne Haabis, the chief of Banu Tameem, who was present at the time said, "I have ten children and I have never shown affection to anyone of them." Rasulullah ﷺ looked at him sharply and said, "He who does not show mercy, will not be shown mercy." It occurs in another *Hadith* that a nomadic Arab asked Rasulullah ﷺ, "Do you kiss your children? We do not kiss them." Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "How can I help it when Allah *Ta'ala* has made your heart devoid of loving feelings." If a person treats his children kindly when they are in difficulty, he gets a specific reward in addition to that for showing kindness to his children normally.

Double reward for looking after a needy relative

عَنْ سَلْمَانَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ رَضِیَ اللّٰہُ عَنْہُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ اَلصَّدَقَۃُ عَلَی الْمِسْكِيْنِ صَدَقَةٌ وَّهِیَ عَلٰی ذِیْ الرَّحِمِ ثِنْتَانِ صَدَقَةٌ وَصِلَةٌ

(رواہ احمد والترمذی وغیرھما کذا فی المشکوۃ)

Rasulullah ﷺ has said, "A Sadaqah given to a poor man is merely Sadaqah, but when it is given to a relative, it serves two purposes. It is Sadaqah and an act of kindness for kinship."

Note: While giving *Sadaqah*, the poor relatives should be given preference over the poor ones among the common people, as it is more virtuous to spend on one's own family. This has been emphasized in the *Ahaadith* in various ways.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Of the (four) *Dinaars*, a *Dinaar* you contribute in the path of Allah, a *Dinaar* spent to set free a slave, a *Dinaar* given as *Sadaqah* to a poor man and a *Dinaar* spent to provide for your family. The one spent to support your family will bring the greatest reward, provided it is spent solely for the pleasure of Allah *Ta'ala* and they need help."

It has been narrated in another *Hadith* that once, when Maimunah *(Radhiallahu anha)* set free a slave-girl, Rasulullah ﷺ said, "It would

have been a greater reward for you if you had given her to your maternal uncle."

Once, Rasulullah ﷺ specifically encouraged women to give *Sadaqah.* After listening to this, Zainab *(Radhiallahu anha)* returned to her husband Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood رضي الله عنه, a famous Sahaabi and a great *Faqeeh*, and said to him, "Rasulullah ﷺ has commanded us to give *Sadaqah* and you are poor so go and ask him if my spending on you will count as *Sadaqah.* Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood رضي الله عنه told her that she had better go and ask it herself. (Possibly he felt shy to ask the question himself or might have thought it would appear selfish to ask such a question). Thus she went to Rasulullah ﷺ and found a woman standing at his door, who had come for the same purpose, but both could not muster the courage to ask him. Meanwhile Bilal رضي الله عنه came out, so they said to him, "Go to Rasulullah ﷺ and tell him that there are two women at the door who have come to ask whether it would count as *Sadaqah* if they gave something to their husbands and to the orphans who are in their charge, from among the children of their late husband's." Bilal رضي الله عنه went in and conveyed the message to Rasulullah ﷺ, who asked him who the women were. Bilal رضي الله عنه explained that there was a woman from the Ansar and Zainab, the wife of Abdullah bin Mas'ood رضي الله عنه. Rasulullah ﷺ then said, "Yes, and they will get two rewards. One for the kinship and the other for *Sadaqah.*" *(Mishkaat)*

Ali رضي الله عنه says, "I would love to help my brother with a *Dirham* rather than spending twenty *Dirhams* on another person. I would rather help him (a brother) with a hundred *Dirhams* than set free a slave." *(Ihya)*

It occurs in another *Hadith* that (when spending money) preference should be given to one's own needs first. If the money exceeds one's needs, it should be spent on one's family. If there is still something extra, it should be spent on other relatives; and if there is

still some left, it should be distributed among other people. *(Kanz)* There are many other *Ahaadith* on this subject related in *Kanzul-'Ummal* and some other collections of *Ahaadith*, but the *Ahaadith* mean that, when spending money, a person can prefer his family above others only if he knows for certain that his family is more in need of help. However, if others are in greater need of help or he himself, in spite of his need, has patience with perfect trust in Allah Ta'ala, it is highly commendable to give others preference over his own needs.

Tasbeeh-e-Faatimi

Ali ﷺ relates: "Shall I tell you an incident about myself and my wife, Faatimah *(Radhiallahu anha)* the dearest and most beloved daughter of Rasulullah ﷺ, who lived with me in my house. She used to grind the corn herself so that corns grew on the palms of her hands. She fetched water for the house in a goatskin bag, the straps of which had left a mark on her body. She swept the house herself, which soiled her clothes. She cooked the food until her dress became black with smoke. In short, she did all the strenuous household jobs herself. Once some war captives were brought to Rasulullah ﷺ and I asked her to go to him and request a helper. She went to Rasulullah ﷺ but, as there were many people around him, she could not ask him out of shyness. Another version has; She mentioned the matter to 'Aaisha *(Radhiallahu anha)* and then returned. The next day, Rasulullah ﷺ visited us and said, "Faatimah, what did you want to tell me yesterday?" She felt shy and kept quiet. I told Rasulullah ﷺ about her daily labours and her having to fetch water, etc., and said that I had sent her to ask for a servant. Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Let me suggest something that is better than a servant. When you go to bed, say: *Subhaanallah,* thirty-three times, *Alhamdulillah,* thirty three times and *Allahu Akbar,* thirty four times. That will be better for you than a servant." (*Abu-Dawood*)

Another version of the *Hadith* adds: Rasulullah ﷺ said, “I cannot give you a servant at this time when the ‘Companions of the *Suffah’* are suffering from pangs of hunger. I shall sell the slaves and spend the price on their requirements.” *(Fath-ul-Bari)*

Assisting one's non Muslim parents

عَنْ اَسْمَاءَ بِنْتِ اَبِیْ بَكْرٍ قَالَتْ قَدِمَتْ عَلَیَّ اُمِّیْ وَهِیَ مُشْرِكَةٌ فِیْ عَهْدِ قُرَیْشٍ فَقُلْتُ یَا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اُمِّیْ قَدِمَتْ عَلَیَّ وَهِیَ رَاغِبَةٌ اَفَاَصِلُهَا قَالَ نَعَمْ صِلِیْهَا (متفق علیه (كذا فی المشكوة)

Asmaa (Radhiallahu anha), the daughter of Hadhrat Abu Bakr ﵁, says that, when Rasulullah ﷺ was negotiating a treaty with the Quraish, her mother, who was a non-believer, came (from Makkah) to visit her (in Madinah) and she asked, "O Rasulullah ﷺ, my mother has come to me, expecting me to help her; shall I help her?" Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "Yes, do help her."

Note: In the early days of Islam, Muslims were cruelly ill-treated by the non-believers and the books of History are full of painful details of their miseries. Even when the Muslims migrated to Madinah Munawwarah, the non-believers did not allow them to live in peace. They attacked them and harassed them in all possible ways. Once Rasulullah ﷺ came to Makkah with a small group of Sahaabah *(Radhiallahu anhum)* with the sole intention of performing *Umrah*, but the non-believers prevented their entry into the Sacred City and compelled them to return to Madinah without performing *Umrah*. On this occasion, however, Rasulullah ﷺ made a treaty with the Quraish to stop fighting for a few years, on certain conditions. This is a well-

known event of Islamic history, to which Asmaa *(Radhiallahu anha)* has referred in the above-quoted *Hadith*. It was during those days of the treaty that the divorced wife of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, who was the mother of Asmaa *(Radhiallahu anha)* but who had not embraced *Islam*, came to visit her in Madinah Munawwarah in the hope of gaining some financial help. As she was a non-believer, Asmaa *(Radhiallahu anha)* could not decide whether she should help her or not, and so asked Rasulullah ﷺ about it, who advised her to help her mother. Commenting on this incident, Imaam Khattabi *(Rahmatullah alaih)* writes: “We can understand from this incident that it is necessary to give material help to relatives, irrespective of their being Muslims or non Muslims.”

The name of Asma’s *(Radhiallahu anha)* mother is said to be ‘Qailah’ or ‘Qutailah’, daughter of Abdul-Uzza, who had been divorced by Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه as she had not embraced Islam. Some *Ahaadith* relate that when she came to visit her daughter Asmaa (*Radhiallahu anha*) with some cheese and pure butter as gifts for her, Asmaa (RA) did not allow her to enter her house, but sent a messenger to her half-sister, ‘Aaisha *(Radhiallahu anha)* requesting her to ask Rasulullah ﷺ whether she (Asmaa) could allow her non Muslim mother into her house. When asked, Rasulullah ﷺ gave her permission and the following *Aayat* was revealed concerning this incident *(Fatah and Durre Manthur).*

لَا يَنْهٰكُمُ اللّٰهُ عَنِ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوْكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ وَ لَمْ يُخْرِجُوْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ
اَنْ تَبَرُّوْهُمْ وَ تُقْسِطُوْٓا اِلَيْهِمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِيْنَ

Allah سبحانه وتعالى does not forbid you from behaving cordially and justly towards those (Kuffaar) who do not fight you for (reason of your) religion and who do not drive you out from your homes. Verily Allah سبحانه وتعالى loves those who are just.

The incident speaks of the firm faith of the ladies of those times, which is really enviable. Just imagine! Her mother comes to her house to visit her (for, she has not yet asked her for any help) but Asmaa *(Radhiallahu anha)* does not allow her to come in until she has found out, by sending a messenger and asking Rasulullah ﷺ, whether it is permissible to entertain one's non-Muslim relatives. Many *Ahaadith* explain that, in the early days of Islam, the Sahaabah *(Radhiallahu anhum)* did not like to give *Sadaqah* to their non-Muslim relatives, until the following *Aayat* was revealed:

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدٰىهُمْ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَهْدِىْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِاَنْفُسِكُمْ

Their guidance is not your duty (O Muhammad ﷺ, you cannot force the Kaafiroon to be Muslims), but Allah ﷾ guides whoever He wills (your duty is only to convey the message). Whatever good (wealth) you spend is for yourselves (you will benefit by earning rewards from Allah ﷾).

The *Aayat* implies that whatever a man spends as *Sadaqah*, etc., for the sake of Allah *Ta'ala* may be given to any needy person, Muslim or non-Muslim. Ibne Abbaas ﵁ says: People did not like to treat their non-Muslim relatives with favour, so that they too, might come into the fold of Islam. Some of them asked Rasulullah ﷺ about it and on this occasion, the above *Aayat* was revealed. The same subject has appeared in several other *Ahaadith. (Durre Manthur)*

Imaam Ghazaali *(Rahmatullah alaih)* writes: "Once a fire-worshipper came to Ibrahim ﵇ and requested to be entertained as a guest. Ibrahim ﵇ refused to entertain him saying, "If you embrace Islam, I shall be pleased to entertain you." After the fire worshipper left, a revelation came to Ibrahim ﵇ from Allah *Ta'ala* saying, 'Ibrahim, you would not feed a non-Muslim for a night until he

accepted your faith while I have been feeding him for the last seventy years, despite his being a non-believer. It would not have mattered much if you had given him a meal.' Ibrahim ﷺ got up at once and went in search of the fire worshipper and asked him to come back and share the meal with him. The fire worshipper returned and, having taken the meal, asked Ibrahim ﷺ what had made him go out and search for him. At this, Ibrahim ﷺ told him about the revelation, on hearing which the fire worshipper embraced Islam and said, "As He has been treating me so kindly, I accept Islam. Please give me necessary instructions." *(Ihya)*

A *Hadith* relates three matters, which are imperative for everybody to act on:

1. Treating one's parents with kindness, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims
2. Fulfilling one's promise, whether it is for a Muslim or a non-Muslim
3. Returning a thing kept in trust to its owner, be he a Muslim or a non-Muslim. *(Jaame-us-Saghir)*

The three divines, Muhammad Ibne Hanafiyyah, 'Ataa and Qatadah *(Rahmatullah alaihim)* are agreed that the following *Aayat* from the Qur'aan requires the Muslims to deal kindly with those of their relatives who are Jews, Christians or other non-Muslims:

اِلَّآ اَنْ تَفْعَلُوْٓا اِلٰٓى اَوْلِيٰٓئِكُمْ مَّعْرُوْفًا

Unless you wish to do a good turn to your (unrelated Mu'mineen or Muhaajireen) friends (in which case you may bequest a maximum of one third of your estate to them).

Showing kindness to the creation of Allah ﷻ

عَنْ اَنَسٍ وَعَبْدِ اللّٰهِ رَضِیَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَا قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّی اللّٰهُ عَلَیْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَلْخَلْقُ عِیَالُ اللّٰهِ فَاَحَبُّ الْخَلْقِ اِلَی اللّٰهِ مَنْ اَحْسَنَ اِلٰی عِیَالِهٖ

(رواه البیهقی فی الشعب کذا فی المشکوة)

Rasulullah ﷺ has said, "All creatures are Allah's ﷻ family (dependents) and those are dearest to Allah ﷻ who treat His family men with kindness."

Note: The phrase "All creatures" includes Muslims, non-Muslims, all mankind, and animals. Islam teaches us to behave kindly towards all creatures, so as to earn the love of Allah *Ta'ala*. It is mentioned in a *Hadith*, that an unchaste woman was granted forgiveness by Allah ﷻ, by virtue of an act of kindness i.e. giving some water to a thirsty dog. In another *Hadith*, it is mentioned that a woman was punished for starving her pet cat to death. Such are the rewards for showing kindness to animals. One can imagine how numerous will be the reward for the good treatment and kindness shown to human beings, who are the best of creation.

A *Hadith* says:

اِرْحَمُوْ مَنْ فِی الْاَرْضِ یَرْحَمْکُمْ مَنْ فِی السَّمَآءِ

"Show mercy to those who are on the earth;

He Who is in the Heavens will have mercy on you".

According to another *Hadith*, Rasulullah ﷺ once said, "Allah *Ta'ala* will not show mercy to him who does not show mercy to other people." Still another *Hadith* has, "Mercy is taken away from the heart of an unfortunate person." *(Mishkaat)*

Each and every incident from the life history of Rasulullah ﷺ bears testimony to the fact that his blessed life was a mercy for the entire world. Therefore, it is important that every member of the Muslim *Ummah* should try to learn the details of his everyday life and follow his blessed example. Allah *Ta'ala* says:

وَمَآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ اِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ

We have sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) as a mercy to the universe (to show mercy towards mankind, Jinn and creation at large by guiding them to the path of salvation).

Commenting on this *Aayat*, Ibne Abbaas رضي الله عنه says: Undoubtedly the sacred personality of Rasulullah ﷺ is a mercy both in this world and in the *Aakhirah* for those who believe in him as a Rasul of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. Moreover, his life is also a mercy for those who do not believe in him. Indeed, through the blessings of Rasulullah ﷺ, they have been saved from suffering drastic punishments in this life, which were inflicted on the *Ummah*s of the past for their sins, such as being swallowed up by the earth or being changed into animals, or being stoned to death from above.

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه says that Rasulullah ﷺ was asked, "Invoke Allah's سبحانه وتعالى curse upon the Quraish, for they have been very cruel in punishing the Muslims and have caused them great harm, but he replied, 'I have not been sent to curse people. I have been sent as a

mercy to mankind!'" There are many other *Ahaadith* on the same subject. *(Durre Manthur)*

In the 'Stories of Sahaabah', the harrowing tale of the sufferings of Rasulullah ﷺ on his visit to Taa'if has been related, describing how the wretched people of Taa'if treated him mercilessly and pelted him with stones, so that his body was covered with blood. However, when the angel of the mountains came and said to him that, if he wished, he (the angel) would cause the hills on both sides of Taa'if to collide so that all the people of Taa'if would be crushed to death. Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "No, if they do not embrace Islam, I hope that among their progeny there will be such people who will embrace Islam and pray to Him."

In the Battle of Uhud, when the Quraish made a severe attack on Rasulullah ﷺ and one of his blessed teeth was broken, he was asked to curse them, but all he said was, "O Allah, show my people the path of *hidaayat* (of Truth). They do not know." Once Umar رضي الله عنه said, "O Rasulullah ﷺ, if you had made *dua* to Allah *Ta'ala* against us (in our pre-Islamic days) as Nooh عليه السلام did, all of us would have been ruined, but you tolerated torture at our hands, and still, you always beg Allah سبحانه وتعالى, saying, 'O Allah forgive my people, for they do not know!'"

Qadhi Ayaaz *(Rahmatullah alaih)* says, if we carefully consider all these incidents, we find in them the great height of moral achievement of Rasulullah ﷺ, showing his great patience, nobility of character and generosity of spirit. The non- believers treated him in the cruellest possible way, but Rasulullah ﷺ always made *dua* to Allah *Ta'ala* to forgive them and grant them proper guidance (i.e. *hidaayat*).

The story of Ghawath bin Haarith is well-known in the life history of Rasulullah ﷺ. Once Rasulullah ﷺ was on a journey and went to sleep all by himself. Ghawath came along unsheathing his sword and awakening him said, "Who can protect you from me?" Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Allah!" On hearing this, Ghawath began to

tremble with fear and the sword fell from his hand! Rasulullah ﷺ then picked up the sword and said, "Who will protect you from me?" The man, seeking his forgiveness, said, "You are the best among those who grasp a sword", upon which Rasulullah ﷺ pardoned him and let him go.

It is also well-known that a Jewish woman poisoned Rasulullah ﷺ and, when questioned, she admitted her crime but he did not take revenge on her.

Labeed Ibnal-A'sam, the Jew, cast a spell on Rasulullah ﷺ. Rasulullah ﷺ was informed about it but did not even want the people to know about it. In short, there are numerous incidents in history which speak of the noble and merciful behaviour of Rasulullah ﷺ towards his enemies.

Rasulullah ﷺ also said: "You cannot be a (perfect) Mu'min unless you behave mercifully to one another." The Sahaabah *(Radhiallahu anhum)* submitted, "O Rasulullah ﷺ, every one of us shows mercy to others," but, Rasulullah ﷺ said, "True mercy does not consist in showing mercy to one's own friends, kinsmen (family), fellow-Muslims. True mercy is that which is all-embracing." Once Rasulullah ﷺ went to a house where some people of the Quraish were sitting together and said to them, "Power shall remain among the Quraish and they shall rule, as long as they show mercy to those who ask for mercy, act justly towards people while giving decisions, give due share to everybody while distributing things; and he who does not observe these will be cursed by Allah *Ta'ala*, cursed by the angels and cursed by all mankind."

Once Rasulullah ﷺ went to a house where some Ansaar were sitting in company with the *Muhaajireen*. When they saw him coming, everybody moved from his place to make room, each one wishing that Rasulullah ﷺ should sit close to him, but he stood in the doorway, resting his hands on the bars of the door, and said, "You

owe me a lot! The Quraish will rule as long as they observe three things particularly:

1. Showing mercy to him who asks for it.
2. Acting justly while giving a decision.
3. Holding fast to a treaty made with other people."

He who does not observe these things shall be cursed by Allah *Ta'ala*, cursed by the angels and cursed by all mankind."

Rasulullah ﷺ has said, "Whosoever kills a sparrow without reason will have to account for it on the Day of Judgment." When asked by the Sahaabah *(Radhiallahu anhum)* what does a man owe to a sparrow? Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "It should be eaten after being killed properly and not thrown away uselessly."

There are numerous *Ahaadith* to the effect: "Feed those of your servants who are under your control from what you eat, clothe them as you wear, dismiss them when they do not suit you, but do not punish them, for you have no right to do so." *(Targheeb)*

According to another *Hadith*, Rasulullah ﷺ once said, "When your servant cooks some food, having suffered heat and smoke, you should ask him to partake of it. However, if the food is small in quantity, you should give him a small part of it. *(Mishkaat).*

Another *Hadith* says: "Treating people under one's authority well is blessed, while treating them badly invites misfortune." *(Mishkaat).* To conclude, Rasulullah ﷺ has insisted that the believers *(Mumineen)* show mercy to all creatures and has encouraged them, in various ways, to be generous to all.

Strengthening relations with those who cut off ties

عَنْ اِبْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَيْسَ الْوَاصِلُ بِالْمُكَافِى وَلٰكِنَّ الْوَاصِلَ الَّذِىْ اِذَا قُطِعَتْ رَحِمُهُ وَصَلَهَا

(رواه البخارى كذا فى المشكوة)

Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said: "He who gives equal treatment in response does not really strengthen family bonds; but he is the one who through kind behaviour strengthens his ties of kinship with those who sever relations with him."

Note: Obviously, if you believe that you should treat your relatives just as they have treated you, you have done little for strengthening family bonds. This principle applies even to strangers. You are morally bound to do good to a person who has done a good turn to you. But, if you do good to a kinsman who does not show much concern for you, remains distant from you or even breaks relations with you, your kind behaviour towards him is in actual fact joining family ties. It is therefore desirable that you should never think of how a relative treats you but think of what you owe him and continue to fulfil your obligations to him, lest you should be called to account on the Day of *Qiyaamah* for negligence in observing your duty to him. Never for a moment entertain a thought of what he owes

you on account of your kinship with him. You should rather feel happy if you are not receiving what is due from him because, on the Day of *Qiyaamah* your reward for foregoing your rights will be far greater than the material benefits you would have gained if he had fulfilled them.

Once a Sahaabi ؓ said to Rasulullah ﷺ, "O Rasulullah ﷺ, I have some relatives. I try to strengthen bonds of family ties with them but they ignore me. I treat them with kindness but they treat me badly. I exercise patience in my behaviour towards them but they are rude to me." Rasulullah ﷺ said, "If you are treating them as you say, you are throwing dust in their faces (they will be disgraced) and Allah *Ta'ala* will continue to support you against them as long as you remain steadfast in your behaviour." *(Mishkaat).* Furthermore, what harm can come to a person who is continuously supported by Allah ﷻ in all his affairs! How can anybody who severs relations with him deprive him of any benefit? An Urdu poet says:

تو نہ چھوٹے مجھ سے یا رب تیرا چھٹنا ہے غضب

یوں میں راضی ہوں مجھے چاہے زمانہ چھوڑ دے

"I would not have You forsaking me, O Lord; O what a calamity (it would) be to be forsaken by you! If you are mine, I won't mind being forsaken by the entire world."

There is no denying the fact that, if Allah *Ta'ala* supports a person, he does not need help from anyone else, for the entire world will work for his good and, even if all people were to unite against him, they would not be able to do him any harm.

Another *Hadith* reports Rasulullah ﷺ as saying, "Allah ﷻ My Lord has commanded me to observe nine things:

1. To fear Allah ﷻ openly and in private (i.e. fear Him from my heart and in my outward behaviour, or fear Him in my lonely hours and while sitting in company with people).

2. To speak justly, both when I am pleased and when angry (when pleased, a person hides the faults and praises the virtues and when angry he frames false accusations. I must speak justly under all conditions).
3. To adopt moderation both in poverty and in riches (i.e. not to be miserly in poverty, nor wasteful in wealth, or, it may mean 'not to grumble or complain when poor, nor take pride when rich).
4. To strengthen ties of kinship with him who breaks relations with me.
5. To show favour to him who has denied me his favours.
6. To forgive him who has wronged me.
7. That my silence should be devoted to meditation (on the signs of Allah *Ta'ala* or the circumstances of the *Aakhirah*, etc.).
8. That my speech should be devoted to Glorify Him or explaining His commandments to people.
9. That my looking at things should be for taking a lesson; and
10. That I should command what is good.

Hakeem bin Hizaam ﷺ says that someone asked Rasulullah ﷺ as to what kind of *Sadaqah* was the best, to which he replied, "Behaving kindly towards a relative who shows hatred towards you." *(Targhib)*

A *Hadith* narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Anyone who wants to have high grades and tall mansions awarded to him on the Day of *Qiyaamah* should forgive a person who wrongs him and show kindness to him who denies him his favours and strengthen ties of kinship with him who has broken it off with him. *(Durre Manthur)*

According to another *Hadith*, when the following *Aayat* was revealed:

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ

Adopt forgiveness (overlook the harm that your enemies do to you), instruct (order others to do) what is right and ignore (shun) the ignorant ones (because it is futile to argue with them).

Rasulullah ﷺ asked Jibra'il ﷷ to explain it to him. Jibra'il ﷷ said, "I shall tell you about it after asking the One Who knows." Hence Jibra'il ﷷ departed and after returning told Rasulullah ﷺ that, "Allah *Ta'ala* was commanding him (in this *Aayat*) to forgive those who wrong him, to grant favours to those who deny him their favours and to strengthen ties of kinship with those who sever relationship with him."

Another version of the *Hadith* adds, that after this revelation, Rasulullah ﷺ addressed the people thus, "Shall I guide you to the excellent qualities of character for this life and for the *Aakhirah*?" The Sahaabah ؓ said, "Certainly!" and he continued, "They are, to forgive him who has wronged you, to give a favour to him who has denied you of his favours, to reunite ties of relationship with him who has broken it off with you." Ali ؓ says that once Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Shall I guide you to the excellent qualities of character possessed by the noble people of the earlier and the later times?" I said, "Certainly" and he said, "They are: to favour him who has deprived you of his favours; to forgive him who has wronged you and to rejoin ties of kinship with him who has broken relations with you." Uqbah ؓ says that Rasulullah ﷺ asked, "Shall I guide you to the excellent qualities of character for this life and the Hereafter?" He then mentioned the aforementioned qualities.

A number of Sahaabah *(Radhiallahu anhum)* have related *Ahaadith* to the same effect. Abu Hurayrah ؓ reports Rasulullah ﷺ as saying, "Nobody can attain perfect sincerity in faith *(Imaan)* until he observes the following: Joins ties of kinship with those who have broken it with him, forgives those who wrong him, pardons those who abuse him and does good to those who ill-treat him." *(Durre Manthur).*

Punishment in this world

عَنْ اَبِیْ بَکْرَۃَ رَضِیَ اللّٰہُ عَنْہُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ صَلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا مِنْ ذَنْبٍ اَحْریٰ اَنْ یُّعَجِّلَ اللّٰہُ لِصَاحِبِہِ الْعُقُوْبَۃَ فِی الدُّنْیَا مَعَ مَا یَدَخِّرُ لَہُ فِی الْاٰخِرَۃِ مِنَ الْبَغْیِ وَقَطِیْعَۃِ الرَّحِمِ (رواہ الترمذی وابو دائد کذا فی المشکوۃ)

Rasulullah ﷺ said, "There is no sin for which the doer deserves punishment in this world, in addition to that reserved for him in the Aakhirah, than the committing of oppression and breaking of family ties.

Note: The *Hadith* means that the two sins, oppression and breaking family bonds, are more readily punished in this world (in addition to the punishment in the *Aakhirah*) than any other sin. Another *Hadith* says, "Of all the sins, Allah *Ta'ala* forgives whichever He likes except the sin of breaking ties with one's parents, which is punished in this life before the death of the sinner." *(Mishkaat)*

Still another *Hadith* says, "The punishment for every sin is delayed by Allah *Ta'ala* till the Day of *Qiyaamah*, except for the sin of disobedience to parents, the doer of which is readily punished in this world. *(Jaami-us-Sagheer).*

There are many *Ahaadith* to the effect that, on the Day of *Qiyaamah*, Allah *Ta'ala* will grant *'Rahim'* (a symbol of kinship) the power to speak. It will catch hold of the Throne *('Arsh)* of Allah

Ta'ala and beseech Him repeatedly thus, "O Allah, grant your reconciliation to him who reconciled with me, and ignore him who ignored me!" Also there are several *Ahaadith* which report Allah *Ta'ala* as saying, "*'Rahim'* (symbol for family bonds) is derived from *Ar-Rahmaan* (The Compassionate one), one of My Attributive Names. I, who am *Rahmaan*, shall look after him who looks after kinship, and I will ignore him who ignores family kinship."

It occurs in another *Hadith* that Allah's ﷻ Mercy does not descend upon a people among whom there is a person who has broken ties with his kinsmen (family). Another *Hadith* reports Rasulullah ﷺ as saying, "Man's deeds are presented to Allah *Ta'ala* every Thursday, but no good act is accepted from a person who breaks family ties." *(Durre Manthur)*

Faqih Abul-Laith *(Rahmatullah alaih)* says: "The sin of a person breaking family ties is the most dreadful one so much so that those who sit in company with him are also denied of blessings from Allah *Ta'ala*. Therefore, everyone must repent from this sin, as soon as possible, and make efforts to reunite ties of relationship with his family members."

Indeed, Rasulullah ﷺ has said, "There is no virtue more readily rewarded than the act of reuniting family bonds and there is no sin of which the doer is more readily punished in this world, over and above having punishment stored up for him in the *Aakhirah*, than the one committing oppression and the one breaking ties of kinship." *(Tambeehul-Ghaafileen)*

One day after Fajr *Salaah*, Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud رضي الله عنه was sitting in company with a number of people when he said, "O people, take an oath, if anyone of you has broken ties of relationship with his kinsmen (family), he should go away and leave us alone, because we are going to beseech a favour of Allah *Ta'ala* and the gates of the heavens are closed for him who has broken kinship (family ties)." *(Targheeb)*.

He meant that the *dua*s of such a person do not reach the heavens, because the doors of the heavens are closed even before his *Dua* reaches there. Thus, if their *dua*s also went up along with his, all would be turned back from the heavens.

There are many other *Ahaadith* on this subject and numerous incidents occurring in this world testify to the fact that a person breaking relations with his family, falls prey to misfortunes and feels miserable throughout his life. In their ignorance, such people do not realise that howsoever hard they struggle, they will not find an escape from their misery (which is a result of the break in family-ties) unless they repent and make up for the wrong. If, under the evil influence of this sin, a man begins to practice something irreligious, taking it to be a genuine act of religion, it will be far more harmful for him, as he might die without entertaining a thought of repentance. (why should he repent of what he believes to be a virtue?)

May Allah, in His kindness, grant us all protection! *Aameen*

Muhammad Zakariyya Kandehlawi